

The Defense Commissary Agency announced May 15 the voluntary recall of packages of 85 percent lean ground beef product purchased at the Fort Leavenworth commissary and nine other commissaries May 1-14 because of possible E-coli O157:H7 contamination.

The commissaries are Great Lakes, IL.; Fort McCoy, WI.; Bolling Air Force Base, D.C.; Carlisle Barracks, PA.; Fort Monmouth, NJ; Naval Air Engineering Station Lakehurst, NJ; Naval Submarine Base New London, CT.; Tobyhanna Army Depot, PA.; Fort Carson, CO.; and Fort Leavenworth, KS.

Commissary customers who have purchased 85 percent lean ground beef product at any of these commissaries May 1 through May 14 should stop consuming it. They can return the product or throw it away and bring their receipt to any DeCA commissary for a full refund.

The recall is prompted by microbial test results conducted by the Department of Defense Veterinary Food Analysis and Diagnostic Laboratory on beef sent by a supplier to the commissaries involved in the action, said DeCA food safety officials.

E. coli O157:H7 is a potentially deadly bacterium that can cause diarrhea and dehydration. Seniors, the very young, and persons with compromised immune systems are the most susceptible to foodborne illness. Cooking ground beef to an internal temperature of 160 degrees Fahrenheit kills harmful bacteria.

Any consumers concerned about an illness should contact a physician. Anyone diagnosed by a physician as having an illness related to E. coli O157:H7 is also urged to contact state and local public health authorities.

Commissary patrons can also get more information on this and other recalls by going to the DeCA Web site at <http://www.commissaries.com>, visit the "Food Safety" section and access links to various consumer safety sites.